

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L OECD PARIS 07871

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ENRG, OECD

SUBJECT: COUNCIL DISCUSSION OF ENERGY POLICY COMMITTEE

REF: USOECD 05208

1. SUMMARY. AS RESULT OF MARCH 25 COUNCIL DISCUSSION, PARTICULARLY UNRESOLVED DIFFERENCES OVER CONTINUED EXISTENCE OF HIGH-LEVEL GROUP, SECGEN'S PROPOSAL FOR ESTABLISHMENT OF NEW COMMITTEE ON ENERGY POLICY (CEP) HAS BEEN SHELVED AT LEAST FOR TIME BEING. END SUMMARY.

2. DISCUSSION FOCUSSED ON HIGH LEVEL GROUP OF OIL COMMITTEE (HLG) AND FACT THAT CEP MANDATE, AS DRAFTED BY SECRETARIAT, WOULD HAVE ALLOWED HLG'S CONTINUED EXISTENCE UNTIL COUNCIL OR CEP DECIDED UNANIMOUSLY TO ABOLISH IT. TURKISH PERMREP, SUPPORTED BY SPANISH, GREEK, AND TO CERTAIN EXTENT, SWISS DELEGATES, ARGUED STRONGLY AGAINST CONTINUATION OF HLG, PRIMARILY BECAUSE OF ITS RESTRICTED MEMBERSHIP.

3. AFTER LISTENING TO TURKISH ARGUMENTS OVER HLG, FRENCH
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AMB. VALERY, IN REMARKABLY MODERATE INTERVENTION, SAID

HIS AUTHORITIES WERE UNCERTAIN OF BENEFITS TO BE DERIVED FROM CREATION OF CEP. IF RESULT WERE TO FURTHER OECD-WIDE COOPERATION ON BROAD ENERGY QUESTIONS, FRANCE WOULD, OF COURSE, SUPPORT NEW COMMITTEE. IF, ON THE OTHER HAND, CREATION OF CEP RESULTED IN ABOLISHMENT OF HLG, WHICH HAD PROVED HIGHLY USEFUL IN PAST AND WHICH, ALTHOUGH IT IS PRESENTLY IN "COCOON-LIKE" STATE OF INACTIVITY, MIGHT AGAIN PROVE USEFUL IN FUTURE, HE WOULD HAVE DOUBTS ABOUT USEFULNESS OF ACTION. VALERY'S STATEMENT ON HLG WAS SUPPORTED BY JAPANESE, US, CANADIAN AND NEW ZEALAND REPS.

4. WHEN IT BECAME CLEAR THAT TURKEY WAS UNWILLING TO BACK DOWN ON HLG QUESTION, VAN LENNEP CLOSED DISCUSSION NOTING THAT IT WOULD BE IMPOSSIBLE TO REACH AGREEMENT. HE INDICATED THAT DISCUSSION OF THIS QUESTION WOULD BE "POSTPONED FOR SOME TIME". NO OTHER ASPECTS OF CEP OR LTEA FOLLOW-UP WERE DISCUSSED.

5. COMMENT: ALTHOUGH EXACT MEANING OF VAN LENNEP'S STATEMENT THAT DISCUSSION OF CEP WOULD BE POSTPONED "FOR SOME TIME" IS UNCLEAR, O IMPRESSION IS THAT HE WILL NOT RAISE THIS QUESTION AGAIN IN THE NEAR FUTURE, PARTICULARLY IN VIEW OF ABSENCE OF FRENCH PRESSURE FOR CREATION OF NEW COMMITTEE.
TURNER

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